

THE EDUCATION OF THE HERO  
AS DEPICTED IN SANSKRIT FICTION \*

Perhaps nowhere has learning been more anxiously sought after and elaborately catalogued than in the society of classical India as depicted in its literature; or, more proudly displayed than by its authors *kavis*. Knowledge, the fruit of learning, was a prize to be won and a treasure to be at once both actively guarded and exploited. The aims of the various sciences to be learned were generally identical with those traditional aims of Hindu society — *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*, and *mokṣa*. Drawing upon the tradition of the *śāstra* literature — texts enumerating, explaining, and commenting upon the arts and sciences for study — many Sanskrit novels and stories *kathās* include episodes which turn upon the hero's skillful employment of some science *vidyā* or art *kalā*. Most often these are applied in some particular instance of opportune chance in order to facilitate the hero's obtainment of his ends. These ends are usually the vanquishing of a rival and the winning of a beautiful maiden<sup>1</sup>. By itself, the singular importance of the hero's erudition and artful skill to the mechanics of plot development merits the inclusion of a section in the novel which details the extent and nature of his formative training. In other stories called *nidarśanakathā* the whole pretext for telling the story, or more properly the stories emboxed in the main narrative frame, is to impart learning through the sugar-coated pill of narrative. In fleshing out abstract principles and vividly displaying the effect of good and bad actions to the listener their aim is to inspire conduct which leads to success. As will be discussed later, *nidar-*

---

\* Page references to Sanskrit and Prakrit works are to the page numbers of those editions of the texts listed in the Bibliography.

1. Two of many possible examples of an art or science used in the winning of a maiden (i) Naravāhanadatta's knowledge of a musical scale played on the *vinā* to accompany the melody of Gandharvadattā's song, BKŚS XVII. (ii) Kuvalayacandra's completion of the verse, given only one *pāda*, which secures him the love of Kuvalayamālā, KMA, p. 154.5.

*śanakathā* often function on more than one level of meaning and interpretation. Examples of this type are the *Pañcatantra* and *Kuṭṭanīmatam* <sup>2</sup>.

The focus of this paper will be on that part of the novel which tells of the formal education of the hero *nāyaka*, most usually a prince. Parallel passages which treat of the heroine *nāyikā*, most usually a princess, will also be discussed where available. Our primary aim is to highlight certain features of the topic by comparing many of the elements involved in this section of any novel with similar narrative portions in several other novels. Below is a list of the texts which we have utilized. While nearly all are Sanskrit compositions, two Prakrit works have been included with a view to giving some representation, however small, of this important body of *kāvya*. Such an inclusion in no way implies an adequate treatment of the literature in Prakrit bearing on the present topic.

Sanskrit	Work	Author	Century A.D.
BKSS	<i>Bṛhatkathāślokaśaṃgrahaḥ</i>	Budhasvāmin	8th or 9th
BKM	<i>Bṛhatkathāmañjarī</i>	Kṣemendra	11th
KSS	<i>Kathāsaritsāgara</i>	Somadeva	11th
K	<i>Kādambarī</i>	Bāṇa	7th
HC	<i>Harṣacarita</i>	Bāṇa	7th
ASK	<i>Avantisundarikathā</i>	Daṇḍin	7th
DKC	<i>Daśakumāracarita</i>	Daṇḍin	7th
TM	<i>Tilakamañjarī</i>	Dhanapāla (I)	10th
USK	<i>Udayasundarikathā</i>	Soḍḍhala	11th
PT	<i>Pañcatantra</i>	Pūrṇabhadra *	12th
KM	<i>Kuṭṭanīmatam</i>	Dāmodaragupta	8th or 9th
SM	<i>Samayamātrkā</i>	Kṣemendra	11th
SMK	<i>Śṛṅgāramañjarīkathā</i>	Bhoja	11th
KMAM	<i>Kuvalayamālākathā</i>	Ratnaprabhasūri	13th
Prakrit			
KMA	<i>Kuvalayamālā</i>	Uddyotanasūri	8th
BK	<i>Bhavisayattakahā</i>	Dhanapāla (II)	10th

\* Original author unknown.

We have as well consulted various *śāstras* which the authors of the above works have undoubtedly drawn upon or which reflect and or comment upon the literary treatment of educational subject matter. These include *Arthaśāstra*, *Kāmasūtra*, *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, and *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*.

\* \* \*

Let us begin with the *Bṛhatkathāślokaśaṃgraha*, one of three existing Sanskrit versions of India's first great novel the *Bṛhatkathā*, said to be

originally composed in Prakrit by one Guṇādhya. The sixth and seventh chapters of the BKSS deal with the birth and boyhood of prince Naravāhanadatta and contain a good amount of information about his formal education. The appeal of Budhasvāmin's work, more so than both the KSS and the BKM, lies in its realistic and sympathetic appreciation of human personality. Human beings are here depicted with both flaws and excellences duly observed, as well as with an eye to the humorous side of life. Budhasvāmin's skill as a novelist is evident in the way he uses episodes to develop themes and to bring important concepts into relief. The charm of his art relies not so much on a monumental tapestry of detail and evocative splendour, as one might say of an author like Bāṇa, as it does on an ability to offer the reader glimpses of spontaneous human behaviour given meaning by the context in which they occur.

One such instance is a description of Naravāhanadatta's behaving as all children do while growing up. He torments his friend Marubhūtika by taking away his ball and, on a further occasion, disturbing him while he is busy at target practice with his bow. On both these occasions Marubhūtika loses all self-control and chases after the young prince<sup>3</sup>. These incidents occur during the period of time when the boys are receiving their education — studying the Vedas and the various arts and sciences. Rather than merely recounting their virtues and praising their progress, Budhasvāmin is more faithful to the vagaries of a developing human temperament and shows his characters as being susceptible to pettiness and immaturity. He achieves this in a style of natural expression that makes the personality of the hero even more likeable and identifiable, more fully human. It also provides a fitting reason for what follows next in the story. Concerned over their lack of decorum and lack of sense, Yaugandharāyaṇa, the chief minister of king Udayana, proposes that the young prince and the ministers' sons be initiated into their future roles as soon as possible so that they may begin to mature and develop a sense of responsibility commensurate with their station in life. This provides him the opportunity to expound on the salient point that intelligence which is bound to facts and theories is worse than useless and has no appreciable good effect on the moulding and development of personality. In fact, if not honed by practical experience the intellect is then liable to misapply knowledge, a course of action resulting in more harm than good<sup>4</sup>. This theme

3. BKSS VI, 17-26.

4. yāvadyāvaddhi śāstrajñāḥ śāstrārthāṇa prayuñjate /  
tāvattāvadbhavantyeṣāṃ kuñṭhāḥ kāryeṣu buddhayaḥ //  
amī rumaṇvadādīnāṃ putrā hariśikhādayaḥ /  
vijānanto'pi śāstrāṇi sutarāmandhabuddhayaḥ //  
vastunyaḥpe'pyanātmajñāḥ saṃrabdhālohitānāḥ /  
prabhumeva jighāṃsanti mrgendraṃ markatā iva //

« As long as they know only theory and do not apply the aims of the sciences, their intellects will remain blunt in the sphere of practical affairs. These ministers'

receives further treatment when the adolescent boys, trying their wings at giving sage advice to their fledgling king, hold council among themselves along with Naravāhanadatta. Hariśikha, sanctimoniously quoting passages from texts on *rājanīti* whether they are truly relevant or not, is justly made fun of by the somewhat arrogant but intelligently perceptive Gomukha who ridicules his pedantry<sup>5</sup>.

This theme, the superiority of intelligence over pedantry, has an important significance. It did not escape the attention of other *kavis* either. Though important, the cataloguing of knowledge by an extensive listing of the various arts and sciences for study is finally secondary to the emphasis placed by Sanskrit authors on the proper understanding and use of knowledge. It is interesting to note that Budhasvāmin, perhaps the most successful of those authors to state this concept in a work of fiction, has really not bothered to include a long list of the subjects studied, something which is often found in other works.

Let us see how some other *kavis*, especially those writers of *nidarśanakathā*, have expressed this same idea: (1) At the end of the third *ucchvāsaḥ* of Daṇḍin's DKC Rājavāhana comments on the success of Apahāravarman's adventure, *paśyata pāratālpikamupadhiyuktamapi gurujanabandhavyasanamuktihetutayā duṣṭāmitrapramāṇābhyupāyatayā rājyopalabdhimūlatayā ca puṣkalāvarthadharmāvapyarādhāt / kiṃ hi buddhimatprayuktaṃ nābhyupaiti śobhām* « See how even adultery in connection with deceit has yielded both *dharma* and *artha* in large measure, by being the means of releasing elders from the distress of imprisonment, by being the method of killing a wicked enemy, and by serving as the basis for the attainment of a kingdom. What does not attain to brilliance when employed by the intelligent? »<sup>6</sup>. Almost all the stories of the DKC celebrate the artful use of intelligence and quick thinking. The attainment of virtuous ends justifies the dubious means used to achieve them. The exploits of the *kumāras* almost remind one of modern adventure novels, wherein the hero takes the law into his own hands and meets with success by relying on his own ingenuity, daring, and quick wits. Such dubious means are, however, not quite

---

sons, Rumaṇvān's Hariśikha and the rest, have intellects that are blind though they are very familiar with the sciences. As regards even a trifling matter, they forget themselves and their faces become white with anger. Like monkeys they want to strike their lion king », BKSS VI, 29-31.

5. *ataḥ pustakavinyastagranthabaddhārthbuddhayaḥ / praśnānugrahamarhanti nedṛśaḥ kūṭamantriṇaḥ // ahaṃ punarguṇopāyaprayogakuśalo yataḥ / cetasyaiḥ saha saṃparkaḥ prayogakuśalairmama //*

« Hence I am not one such as those false ministers who, having their minds dependent on meanings fettered to theories deposited in books, are not worthy of the honour of consultation. And furthermore, I am skilled in the employment of foreign policy and schemes for success because of my association with intelligent men proficient in their practical application », BKSS VII, 75-76.

6. DKC, pp. 122-23.

without official sanction. Among the arts learned by the youths during their education there are included *cauryadurodarādikapatakalāprauḍhatvam* «perfection in theft, gambling, and other deceitful arts»<sup>7</sup>. Mention is also made in K that all the arts of gambling were part of the curriculum of study prescribed for Candrāpīḍa<sup>8</sup>. (2) In the fourth chapter of Kṣemendra's SM the madam *kuṭṭanī* (the true *guru* of the prostitute) named Kañkāli has just begun to instruct the heroine, a prostitute named Kalāvati, in the science of harlotry when she says, *na kulena na śilena na rūpeṇa na vidyayā / jīvitābhyadhikam buddhilaḥyaṃ dhanam avāpyate //* «Neither by family, nor by virtue, nor by beauty, nor by knowledge is wealth — supreme in this life — obtained; it must be gotten by intelligence»<sup>9</sup>. (3) The introduction to the PT provides us a witty perspective on the anxiety and concern shown by parents for the academic success of their progeny; for nowhere is this more evident than in the case of a king distressed over the stupidity and unlearnedness of his sons. Desperate to find a way of enlightening his three sons, king Amaraśakti asks that some means be suggested by someone from among the large assembly of scholars whose livelihood he is providing for. At first he is only reminded of the many years required to complete the conventional course of studies. Then a counsellor named Sumati points out that since time is short and many obstacles intrude while infinite are the things to be learned some way must be found to impart what is essential and to discard the inessential. He suggests a *brāhmaṇa* named Viṣṇuśarman who would be equal to the task. Viṣṇuśarman accepts the challenge and succeeds in teaching the three princes *nītiśāstra* within six months. He composed the five texts of the PT which he then taught them. His didactic tales effectively circumvented a long and, we are encouraged to suspect, rather tedious course of formal education. The message of the *kathāmukha* is to emphasize the aim of education which is stated there as *pratibodhanam* «awakening» «enlightening»<sup>10</sup>. And while it lists the various *śāstras* — *vyākaraṇa*, *dharmaśāstra*, *arthāśāstra*, and *kāmaśāstra* — it implies that a thorough study of their contents is not the only satisfactory route towards the refining of one's intelligence.

Having read those parts of several novels dealing with a prince's education it occurs to one that this introductory passage to the PT can be read almost as a burlesque of those works written in a more serious tone. The despair of the king over his blockhead sons and his search for some extraordinary means to achieve their education is in a way a gentle spoof of the usual narrative wherein the proud king builds a

---

7. DKC (*pūrvapīṭhikā*), p. 22.

8. K, p. 126.

9. SM IV, vs. 19.

10. PT, p. 2, line 14. Synonymous expressions which have principally the same meaning in this context: *prabodhanārthaṃ*, p. 2, line 17; *bālābabodhanārthaṃ*, p. 3, line 13.

splendid school, maintains there a faculty of learned professors and is filled with joy on learning of his son's diligent and rapidly successful progress through a vast curriculum of study, secure in the knowledge that the prince will be a worthy successor to his throne. King Amaraśakti laments, ... *mamaite putrāḥ śāstravimukhā vivekarahitāśca / tade-tānpaśyato me mahadapi rājyaṃ na saukhyamāvahati* / « ... these sons of mine are averse to study and devoid of insight. Consequently, when I look at them my kingdom, though it is vast, brings me no happiness »<sup>11</sup>. Almost directly in contrast with the above we cite the following passage from Bāṇa's K. Śukanāsa, the prime minister of king Tārāpīḍa, declares on seeing the accomplished young prince, *tāta candrāpīḍāya khalu devasya tārāpīḍasya samāptavidyam upārūḍhayauvanamālōkyā bhavanam sucirādbhuvanarājyaaphalaprāptirupajātā* / « Dear Candrāpīḍa, seeing that you have grown to youth and completed your learning, there has occurred today, after so long a time, the fulfillment of king Tārāpīḍa's earthly rule »<sup>12</sup>. Śukanāsa continues his lavish praise of the prince, emphasizing the blessing received by his parents in having such a son, and the good fortune of his future subjects<sup>13</sup>.

\* \* \*

Reading detailed descriptions of the context in which the education of the hero progresses — the place of learning, his teachers, fellow pupils, the length of study — one begins to discern a consistent pattern of narrative events. These events vary in detail between the various *kathās*, but it is the correspondences which prove most interesting. At the least, these details may provide us, then, with a composite picture of the literary treatment of education at the ruler's court. Below is a comparative outline of the hero's educational career after his birth and earliest childhood years.

*Period of Education:* BKSS states no age or number of years; KSS tells us that Naravāhanadatta was studying the sciences by the time he was eight<sup>14</sup>; BKM states no age or number of years; K states that

11. PT, p. 1, lines 17-18.

12. K, p. 157.

13. As a textbook for rulers the *Arthaśāstra* has something germane to say on the role of intelligence and its effective use in educational training, *śrutāddhi prajñāpajāyate prajñāyā yogo yogādātmaṃvṛteti vidyānām sāmāthyam* / « From learning arises intelligence, from intelligence arises application, from application arises self-discipline; such is the power of the sciences », *Arthaśāstra*, I, 5.16. Cf. also the virtues possessed by Harivāhana, hero of the *Tilakamañjarī*, as a student: attentiveness *abhiyuktatā*, self-reliance *svādhīnatā*, sharpness of intellect *kuśāgriyatā* *nijabuddher*, and resolute application *abhiyogah*. Upon completing his studies at the age of sixteen, *ārabdhakāryasya tribhuvane'pyaśakyamavijeyamasādhyaṃ ca kimapi na prāye-ṇābhut* / « There was probably nothing whatsoever in the three worlds that was impossible, unconquerable, or unattainable for him once he had undertaken to do it », TM, p. 79.

14. KSS VI, 1.5.

Candrāpīḍa began when he was in his sixth year and graduated during his sixteenth for a total of ten years residence in school<sup>15</sup>; Bāṇa's autobiography in the HC states that he left his teacher's house when he was fourteen<sup>16</sup>; ASK informs us that investiture with the sacred thread *upanayana*, the ceremony which marks the beginning of formal education, took place either during the eighth, eleventh, or twelfth year from conception according to one's caste; or, in an alternate schedule, from the fifth, seventh, or eighth year from conception according to one's caste<sup>17</sup>. We assume that these numbers apply to Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas respectively. The *Avantisundarikathāsāra* states that Rājavāhana's education was complete at age sixteen when he set out on his mission of world conquest<sup>18</sup>; DKC (*pūrvapīṭhakā*) offers no details in this matter of age; TM states quite clearly, as does K, that the period of study was ten years in length, Harivāhana began when he was six and graduated when he was sixteen<sup>19</sup>; KMA, a Jaina work, states that the prince was entrusted to a teacher at the age of eight and studied with him until he was twelve years old<sup>20</sup>; BK, another Jaina novel, does not enlighten us concerning the age at which studentship was engaged. From the above it may generally be stated that the period of formal education undergone by a youth lasted a decade, from the sixth to sixteenth years. The Jaina writer(s), perhaps with a view to asserting superiority of Jaina heroes over their Brāhmaṇical counterparts, shortens this period to four years.

*Physical Accomodation - The School*: BKSS merely states that the boys' quarters *kumāravaṭakā* came under the superintendence of teachers<sup>21</sup>, there is no mention of a new structure being built; K is the most specific and detailed in this matter. A well-equipped school (complete with underground exercise room) of magnificent proportions was built outside the city To make up for the geographical separation Candrāpīḍa was visited daily by his parents. There was a large faculty of specialists maintained there by the king<sup>22</sup>; TM, contrary to K, has the king build a school within the precincts of the royal palace in which, once again, many learned teachers are maintained<sup>23</sup>; KMA states that Kuvalayacandra was sent to a school *vijjāgharayaṃ*<sup>24</sup> (Skt. *vidyāgrhaṃ*) where he remained in seclusion, separated from his parents, until his twelfth year; BK relates that Bhavisayatta set out happily for the school

15. K, p. 128.

16. HC, p. 63.

17. ASK, p. 204; Daṇḍin himself began his studies after his seventh year i.e. when he was eight, ASK, p. 12.

18. *Avantisundarikathāsāra*, Madras, 1957, p. 46.

19. TM, pp. 78-9.

20. KMA, p. 21, lines 12-15.

21. BKSS VI, 15.

22. K, pp. 125-26.

23. TM, pp. 78-9.

24. KMA, p. 21, line 14.



*ujjhāsāla* (Skt. *upādhyāyāsāla*) and upon graduating he departed with the appropriate celebration of honouring the Jina with gifts<sup>25</sup>.

*Classmates*: The principal classmates of the hero during his school-days are usually those who will be his companions throughout the course of his life and adventures. These friendships formed early in life become very important later on as the novel's plot takes full shape. In BKSS Naravāhanadatta's principal companions are the four ministers' sons: Hariśikha, Marubhūtika, Gomukha, and Tapantaka<sup>26</sup>. They become the prince's ministers when he becomes crown prince; in KSS this number of playmates is increased to six by the addition of twin sons, nephews of Udayana's family priest Śāntikara<sup>27</sup>. This is done, however, to make possible the employment of a poetic fancy by Somadeva. The prince's six companions are likened in their beneficial effect to the six measures of foreign policy *śadguṇāḥ*<sup>28</sup>. Interestingly enough this same literary comparison occurs in BKSS in a slightly altered way and with reference to Naravāhanadatta's father king Udayana. His four minister-companions, the fathers of the prince's companions, are likened to the four schemes for success *upāyāścatvārāḥ*<sup>29</sup>. Both these comparisons emphasize the importance of the ministers' role and in turn the importance of the hero's boyhood friends. It should also be noted that this is a fine example of the propensity of authors for displaying erudition in their works; in this case writings on *arthaśāstra* are being utilized; BKM mentions the four ministers' sons as Naravāhanadatta's principal companions<sup>30</sup>; K limits the number to only one, he is Vaiśampāyana the son of Tārāpīḍa's prime minister Śukanāsa<sup>31</sup>; in TM Harivāhana meets his boon companion only after his formal education has been completed<sup>32</sup>; in DKC and ASK the classmates of the hero are once again ministers' sons, seven in number, as well as two sons of a political ally of Rājahaṃsa. The sons of Rājahaṃsa's four active ministers were Rājavahana's companions in earliest childhood. To their number were subsequently added the sons, each one a nephew of at least one of the king's four ministers, of three others who though eligible to be ministers by their birth chose other careers to follow instead. Also added were the aforementioned two sons of Prahāravarman. The events which lead to the arrival of these five *kumāras* at Rājahaṃsa's court in exile at the hermitage of Vāmadeva are quite miraculous. In the end, including

25. BK Sandhi Two, I, 14-II, 10.

26. BKSS VI, 9-12.

27. KSS IV, 3, 91.

28. KSS IV, 3, 93.

29. BKSS IV, 19.

30. BKM VII, vss. 559-562.

31. K, p. 126.

32. TM, p. 80, pp. 95-102.



Rājavāhana, there are ten<sup>33</sup> *kumāras* who play, study, and grow up together. Neither KMA nor BK make mention of fellow students though one may assume their presence. Besides those classmates who are companions to the hero there are other students present as well. BKSS mentions students of the Vedas in whose company the principal characters attended school<sup>34</sup>. TM alludes to the presence of others, while K specifies them as *ācāryakulaputra* « the sons of nobles and preceptors »<sup>35</sup>.

*Teachers:* For the most part teachers are anonymous as a group. They are sought out and maintained under the king's direction and it seems that they each specialized in a particular branch of learning and that enthusiastic instructors of good character were available for every art and science. When some special instruction or interpretation was to be made, the « teacher » is usually the king's prime minister<sup>36</sup> or the king<sup>37</sup> himself who, of course, is named.

*Curriculum:* It is not our object to give a detailed listing of all the various arts and sciences studied. What is notable is the vast extent of the subjects mastered by the hero. Why should this « all-knowingness » be an essential attribute of the hero? The answer may be that the hero, most often a prince and future universal monarch, was to the author and his readers the highest embodiment of Brāhmaṇic culture and Hindu society, standing at the very apogée of *varṇāśramadharma*. It was therefore a necessity that he be as nearly perfect as possible. The *nāyaka*'s attention to learning and the enumeration of the various *śāstras* and *kalās* might go somewhat towards preserving their place in society, and emphasizing the importance of the Brāhmaṇas who were qualified to teach them<sup>38</sup>.

---

33. The number ten is based on the account given in the *purvapīṭhikā* of the DKC. There are actually eleven *kumāras* according to the text of the ASK; this probably follows the original plan of Daṇḍin. Pending the recovery of the full text of the ASK the full scale of Daṇḍin's great work remains a mystery.

34. BKSS VI, 15.

35. K, p. 125.

36. K, pp. 166-80.

37. BKSS VII, 56-62; BKSS XVII, 116.

38. If the substance of the curriculum of study is any indication of vested interest then the relatively large number of topics related to trade and commerce included in the novels of Jaina authors should testify to that fact. Novels about or including merchants, the supporters of the Jaina community, would naturally be of great importance to *kavis* included in that religious community. Thus in the KMA trade *vāṇijjam* along with many related topics of knowledge are included in the hero's course of study (KMA, p. 22, lines 1-10). In the BK the arts and sciences are included first; however, the martial arts are then listed in some detail. The use of various weapons and defencing against them, hand to hand combat, giving and countering blows, wrestling, vaulting, riding elephants and horses are all listed (BK Sandhi Two, II, 5-8). The lives of merchants often included travel for profitable trade. This travel with valuable goods by caravan or ship was very hazardous as attacks by robbers and pirates were frequent (see for example KMA, p. 135, lines

The one clear division which exists in the curriculum of study is that between *śāstra* and *kalā*. In BKSS the boys observed vows while studying the Vedas and literature (both *śāstra* and *kāvya*) while it was not necessary to do so when they studied the arts<sup>39</sup>. ASK gives a quite elaborate description of the various restrictions and practices involved in the observance of such vows<sup>40</sup>. TM neatly distinguishes the two by using the terms *vidyā* and *upavidyā*<sup>41</sup>. In the case of the *śāstras* there is often mention of the different authors traditionally associated with them; ASK for instance speaks of the *dharmaśāstras* beginning with Manu, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama and so on<sup>42</sup>. Both the *śāstras* and *kalās* were necessary for the complete education of the hero, and skill in the various practical arts as well as mastery of the principles of statecraft and the use of various weapons were essential to a prince.

*Miscellaneous Aspects:* (1) In close connection with the details of the *nāyaka*'s education there generally occur the following: (a) ceremonies such as the *upanayana* (just prior) and the *abhisekham* (immediately after) (b) glowing accounts of the hero's nobility of character and the beauty and grace of his bodily form (c) a « coming out » upon his graduation in which the people of the country have a chance to observe the future ruler; an envoy from the king sent to inform the prince (and his companions) of such an event<sup>43</sup> (d) the gift of a horse<sup>44</sup> (a modern parallel for this would be the present of an automobile on the sixteenth birthday) and mansion<sup>45</sup> (e) the beginning of « world conquest » and the start of marvellous adventures and romance(s). (2) Naturally, there are many parallels in the vocabulary used by *kavis* in treating of this part of the *nāyaka*'s career. Phrases such as *sakalā-kālākalāpaḥ*, *sarvavidyā* and *śāstrārthāḥ* recur frequently.

The apparent ease with which the hero masters the whole extant corpus of knowledge is a feature of singular note. It is often declared that the sciences of themselves enter the body of the hero. This fact may seem to oppose the diligence and self-discipline which are so much a part of the character of the novel's leading figure, yet really the expression of this idea glorifies his nature as a whole and is a testimony to his ability and intelligence since he is honoured as a most worthy

25 ff.; BKSS XVIII, 202 ff.). Obviously then, proficiency in arms and self-defence were an essential part of a merchant's training. In the Brāhmaṇical novels, such as those of Daṇḍin and Bāṇa, great emphasis is placed on knowledge of the Vedas and the *śāstras* expounding *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma* as well as the practical and martial disciplines.

39. BKSS VI, 16.

40. ASK, p. 204.

41. TM, p. 79.

42. ASK, p. 205.

43. BKSS VII, 53 ff.; K, p. 128. In both novels the king sends his *senāpati* to bear his message to the prince.

44. K, p. 129; KMA, p. 23, line 12.

45. K, p. 157; TM, p. 79.

vessel. It does two other things as well; it makes the sciences seem like autonomous realities, divinities; and suggests that the hero has been preordained by fate, or whatever controlling power, for greatness. What follow are statements of this idea in several novels: (a) K - *maṇidarpaṇa ivātinirmale tasmīnsaṃcakrāma sakalaḥ kalākālāpaḥ* / « The entire collection of arts entered into him as if he were an exceedingly clear jewelled mirror »<sup>46</sup>. (b) KMAK - *...kumāro medhānidhiḥ sakalābhiḥ kalābhiścīrādutkaṇṭhitacetobhir vadhūbhiriva vāllabhaḥ prāvṛṣi nadībhirivādīnābhīrādīnāḥ svayaṃ svikṛtaḥ* / « It is as if the prince, a treasury of intelligence, were a husband spontaneously accepted by his brides, all the arts, their hearts long yearning for him; like the ocean effortlessly claimed by great rivers during the rains »<sup>47</sup>. (c) BK - *emaivisiṭṭhaim aṇṇaḥiṇṇi aṇṇau guṇiḥiṇṇi tāsu variu* / « His body was chosen by other distinguished attributes such as these »<sup>48</sup>. (d) BKM - *tato rahaḥ-sthito rājā rajanītilakānanāḥ / drṣṭvā varāṅganāḥ prahvyaḥ prapracchā-gamakāraṇam // tāḥ prāhurbhūpate sarvā vidyāḥ kalāstathā / śarīraṃ praviśāmo'dya tava putrasya dhimataḥ // ... tatastā viviśur vidyā rāja-putraṃ kalāśca tāḥ / tadāviśaśca sa babhau sudhāsikta ivodupaḥ //* « Remaining in secret, the king saw those modest women wearing yellow tilakas on their faces and asked them the reason for their coming. They replied, "Oh king, we are all the sciences and all the arts, today we enter the body of your intelligent son". ... The sciences and arts then entered the prince; and so entered he consequently became filled with nectar like the moon »<sup>49</sup>. (e) KSS - *anyedyur nirgato draṣṭuṃ devaṃ devakule ca saḥ / dadarśa nṛpatirbahviḥ suvastrābharanāḥ striyāḥ // kā yūyamiti prṣṭāśca tena tāstam babhāṣire / vayaṃ vidyāḥ kalāścaitastvatputrārthamihāgatāḥ // gatvā viśāma khaṣṭāntarityuktvā tāstiro'bhavan / savismayaḥ sa rājāpi vatseśo'bhyantaraṃ yayau //* « On the following day he went to view a god in the temple but instead the king saw many women dressed in beautiful clothes. "Who are you?", he asked them. They told him, "We are the sciences and these are the arts who have come here for the sake of your son. We will go and enter in at the places of bodily opening (?)»<sup>50</sup>. Once they had said this they vanished and the astounded king, lord of the Vatsas, went inside »<sup>51</sup>. This intervention of supernatural powers in the life of the hero is characteristic of the Indian novel, especially those (and there are many) in which both humans and semi-divine beings such as *vidyādhara*s and *gandharva*s each share a large part of the narrative and interact with one another. This personification of knowledge and its seeking out of the hero foreshadows Naravāhanadatta's prophesied attainment of the

46. K, p. 126.

47. KMAK, p. 8, line 41; p. 9, line 2.

48. BK Sandhi Two, II, 9.

49. BKM VII, vss. 556, 557, 569.

50. KSS VI 8, vs. 156; should the text read *khaṣṭhāntar* instead of *khastantar*?

51. KSS VI, 8, vss. 154-156.

status of a *vidyādhara*, which he acquires as a boon from Śiva upon his completion of a rigorous period of asceticism. Coincident with this he also as foretold finally becomes emperor *cakravartin* of the *vidyā-dharas* after many spectacular adventures, *tapastuṣṭaśca bhagavānsa dattvā darśanam śivāḥ / devyā giriṇyā sārḍhameva prahvaṃ tamādiśat // vidyādharaṇāṃ sarveṣāṃ cakravartī bhavādhunā / sarvāḥ sarvāti-śāyinyo. vidyāḥ-sarvāḥ-saviḡrahāḥ-/-kimādiśasi-yatkurma-ityājñāsādhana-*notsukāḥ // « Pleased with his (Naravāhanadatta's) asceticism, Lord Śiva granted him a vision of Himself and, accompanied by the goddess Daughter of the Mountain, he commanded the bowing prince, "Become now emperor of all the *vidyādhara*s and let all the all-surpassing sciences manifest themselves unto you!..." ». ... Then all the sciences appeared before him in bodily form and eager to fulfill his orders they said, "We will do what you command" »<sup>52</sup>. These latter *vidyās*, the special property of the *vidyādhara*s, are qualitatively different from those studied by mortals. They are magical in nature and confer fantastic powers not unlike those possessed by the modern-day comic-strip-hero Superman.

Supernatural favour which confers complete knowledge is opposite yet complimentary to the sentiment expressed by the well known verse from the introduction to the PT:

Verbal science is boundless indeed.

Since life is short and obstacles are many  
This being the case, let the essence be grasped,  
having discarded the inessential,  
Just like the geese do milk from the midst  
of water.

While the one demands a remarkable individual predestined for greatness the other admits the limits of human abilities and seeks to transcend them in the most efficient way possible. However, both represent attempts, conscious or otherwise, to circumvent the long and arduous task of study.

\* \* \*

The space provided in novels for discussing the education of the heroine *nāyikā* is generally not great. The only exceptions to this rule are found in the novels on harlotry; however these deal with a somewhat different quality of woman than that met with in romances. Says Rājasekhara in his *Kāvyaṃmāṃsā* on this topic, *śrūyante dṛśyante ca rājaputrya mahāmātraduhitara gaṇikāḥ kautukibhāryāśca sāstraprahata-buddhayaḥ kavayaśca /* « Princesses, daughters of prime ministers, prostitutes, and jesters' wives are heard and seen to have intellects established in knowledge and to be authors »<sup>53</sup>. We will discuss first

52. KSS XIV, 3, vss. 129, 130, 134.

53. *Kāvyaṃmāṃsā*, X, p. 53.

those heroines who fall within the first two of Rājaśekhara's categories.

The education of women of noble birth as depicted in literature seems to have been restricted mainly, by omission at any rate, to the fine arts. The birth of a girl was generally considered a calamity; the birth of the heroine was only a cause for jubilation in that she was destined to marry a universal monarch<sup>54</sup>. Her status is real enough, but ultimately it is dependent on her relationship to the hero. TM offers a somewhat more extensive account of the education of a princess than we normally find: *svabhavanagatā ca sarvadā sarvakalāśāstrakuśalena sarvadeśabhāṣāvidā sarvapaurāṇikākhyānakapraṇiṇena strījanena citrā-bhīḥ kathābhīrvinodiyamānā dīnānyativāhayati* / « When at home she (Tilakamañjarī) always spent her days being entertained by stories and paintings with her ladies who were versed in all legends and tales, who knew all the dialects, and who were proficient in all the arts and sciences »<sup>55</sup>. Her friend, the princess Malayasundarī, spent her days in much the same fashion. It may indeed be significant that the word used to describe their activity is *vinoda*<sup>56</sup> « diversion » « amusement ». This contrasts sharply with the serious, studied application to learning which is integral to the depiction of the hero in the same novel. The point is not that the heroine was not a serious person, but that the importance of her studies to her role in life was not that great; except that she be accomplished in the fine arts of dancing, painting, music and so forth. As it is said of Malayasundarī, she studied *ucitavidyās* along with their esoteric portions<sup>57</sup>; these « suitable » sciences were headed by dancing and playing music. The USK repeats this pattern but seems to go one step further in describing the arts enjoyed by the heroine as *śaiśava*<sup>58</sup>, those appropriate to childhood.

One gets a somewhat different perception of the heroine in passages which talk of her character and intelligence. Kādambarī *asyā api rāja-kulasamṣparkaturā matiḥ* / « Whose intellect was sharp through association with the palace »<sup>59</sup> was nobody's fool we are given to understand. Intelligent well-educated women also demanded husbands equal in quality to themselves. In the story of Upahāravarman's adventures, the lady who falls in love with him is already married to someone else. She detests her husband and only came to be his wife because her intended from birth (who it turns out is none other than Upahāravarman) was lost and her father gave her in marriage to a suitor named Vikāṭavarman, a man definitely not to her liking. Her description of him is

54. TM, p. 263.

55. TM, p. 169.

56. TM, pp. 169, 264.

57. TM, p. 264.

58. USK, p. 97. It must must be kept in mind though that the word *śaiśava* refers to the period of age under sixteen years; according to Apte, *Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 927.

59. K, p. 296.

one that well fits that of the villain *pratināyaka*: *ayaṃ ca niṣṭhuraḥ pitṛdrohī nātyupapannasaṃsthānaḥ kāmopacāreṣvalabdhavaicakṣaṇyaḥ kalāsu kāvyanāṭakādiṣu mandābhīniveśaḥ śauryonmādī durvikathano'nṛtavādī cāsthānavarṣī* / ...*ayogyaśca pumān...* «He is cruel, treacherous towards his father, unbecoming in appearance, lacking expertise in the manners of love, indifferent to drama, poetry, and the arts, power-mad, a false braggart and liar who bestows (gifts) on the unworthy, ... the man is unsuitable... »<sup>60</sup>.

The novels on harlotry merit a thorough study in themselves. They fall into that category of literature known as *nidarsanakathā*, illustrative or didactic stories. These novels were written not only to delight the reader by the charm and wit in which the narrative abounds but also to expose the cunning means by which prostitutes deprive their clients of wealth and lead them to ruin. On the surface the plot is merely the instruction of a young, beautiful prostitute *gaṇikā* who seeks the advice of an experienced bawd *kuṭṭanī* so that she may become adept at attracting suitably wealthy clients and so achieve success in her profession. However, on another level of interpretation, by doing such a masterful job of instruction exemplified by story the *kuṭṭanī* gives away to the reader (via the author) the secrets of her profession, a profession which relies ultimately upon deceit and misrepresentation. So, in the final analysis, an exposé of harlotry is presented. This plan holds true for KM and SM, and to a certain extent for SMK. The latter novel is more equally written to promote the welfare of the prostitute; that as well as fleecing others of their wealth she can protect herself from those rogues who would cheat and dispossess her<sup>61</sup>. SMK may well have been written by Bhoja for a favourite *gaṇikā* in his entourage.

Once again, as shown before in BKSS, there is a distinction made between quantity and quality in education. Quantity refers to the number and type of arts and sciences learned while quality refers to the ability to understand and successfully apply them to the end appropriate for the character. For the prostitute this end is *artha*, the attainment of money. While she must be proficient in the fine arts and well versed in the principles and practices of *kāmasāstra* she must above all understand human psychology so that she can manipulate men to the utmost degree. To do this effectively the *gaṇikā* must herself be free of passion and personal attachment; it is repeatedly stated that she must not fall in love: (1) SMK - *yasyāṃ ca vaiśikopaniṣadi rahasya-metad yad vyāghrādiva premṇaḥ sāvadhānatayā sarvvadāivātmā rakṣa-ṇīyaḥ* / «This is the secret concerning the true doctrine of harlotry: that through self-attention one's self should always be guarded from love as if from a tiger »<sup>62</sup>. (2) KM - *bālye tāvad ayogyā paścādapi*

60. DKC, pp. 109-10.

61. SMK, p. 18.

62. SMK, p. 19.

*vrddhabhāvaparibhṛtā / tārūṇye rāgahr̥tā yadi gaṇikā bhramatu tad-bhikṣām* // « While yet a child she is unfit and also later when she is possessed of old age. So if a prostitute gets carried away by love in her youth, she may as well then go begging »<sup>63</sup>. The whole story of Sundarasena and Hārālatā in the KM illustrates the tragic end in store for the prostitute who falls in love. As well as eschewing love, the prostitute must also avoid truth to maintain her livelihood if we are to believe Kṣemendra: *SM - asatyenaiva jīvanti veśyāḥ satyavivarjitāḥ / etāḥ satyena naśyanti madyleneva kulāṅganāḥ* // « Discarding truth, prostitutes live by untruth. Those who live by truth are ruined, as women of high birth are ruined by liquor »<sup>64</sup>.

Many more such verses could be quoted which discuss the conduct appropriate for a prostitute. The course of education required for the *gaṇikā* receives ample enough treatment in *kāvya*. The basis for her curriculum is the text of the *Kāmasūtra*. The essence of the *gaṇikā*'s course of instruction is conveyed in the following lines from Dāmodara-gupta's KM which describe the heroine Mālātī: *sīthilayatu kusumacāpaṃ kṣipatu śārānvāṇadhau manojanmā / saṃsārasārabhutā vicarati bhuvi mālātī vātsyāyanamadanodayadattakaviṭavṛttarājaputrādyaḥ / ucchvāsitaṃ yatkiṃ cittattasyā hṛdayadeśamadyāste* // *bharataviśākhiladaṇṭilavṛkṣāyurvedacitrasūtreṣu / patracchedavidhāne bhramakarmaṇi pu-stasūdaśastreṣu* // *ātodyavādanavidhau nṛte gīte ca kauśalaṃ tasyāḥ / abhidhātum yadi śakto vadanasaahasreṇa bhogināmīśaḥ* // « Let the God of Love slacken his flower bow and toss his arrows in their quiver now that Mālātī, the living quintessence of the existing world, walks the earth. Whatever has been expressed by Vatsyāyana, Madanodaya, Dattaka, Viṭavṛtta, and Rājaputra lives at the centre of her heart's domain. Perhaps Śeṣa, lord of serpents, would be able with his thousand mouths to declare her proficiency in song, dance, and the performance of instrumental music; in the works on cooking and sculpture; in lathe-work; in making stencils; in the textbooks on painting and arboriculture; in the works of Daṇṭila, Viśākhila, and Bharata »<sup>65</sup>. The very best account available of the moulding of a prostitute from the moment of her birth onwards is probably that given in the second *ucchvāsaḥ* of the DKC. Among the interesting details given we learn that while a *gaṇikā* was

63. KM, vs. 543.

64. SM IV, vs. 68.

65. KM vss. 121-24. The group of five authors' names, two of which belong to known writers on *kāmasāstra*, refer collectively to the works on *kāma* which Mālātī has internalized. Lathework *bhramakarman* is the same as *taṣṣakarman* in the list of sixty-four arts in the *Kāmasūtra*. According to Yaśodhara's commentary this was the making of mechanical sex aids, such as an artificial penis (KS Comm. I, 3, 15; II, 6, 6). Daṇṭila is probably the same as Dattila, a writer of a work on music and dancing (Krishnamacchariari: *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 827). Viśākhila is a writer on music (Krishnamacchariari, p. 820). The phrase *bhogināmīśaḥ* contains a rather appropriate pun since *bhagin* means « sensualist » or « lover » as well as « serpent ».



to be literate and well spoken *śabdahetu samayavidyāsu vārtāmātrāva-bodhanam* «only knowledge of the facts in the sciences of grammar, logic, and astrology»<sup>66</sup> were taught to her. From this it can be inferred that no deep comprehension of highly intellectual subjects was necessary. Rather, she was given extensive training in the fine arts and in the intricacies of sexual behaviour. The prostitute's whole education and training (including her advertising) in this passage reads almost like the handling of a superb athlete or thoroughbred animal. The splendid description of Śṛṅgaramañjarī's attainments in ŚMK, which bespeaks the author's familiarity with *kāmaśāstra*, stresses her knowledge in the fine arts and sophisticated pastimes<sup>67</sup>; and while it gives some weight to her intellectual abilities these are still exercised mainly in the realm of those subjects previously mentioned. And, of course, this is just as it should be for a *gaṇikā*. Still, the important instruction for the prostitute in Bhoja's work, as in all the novels on harlotry, is that beauty and accomplishments matter little unless a *gaṇikā* has an understanding of male human psychology and is familiar with schemes to exploit this knowledge to her fullest advantage.

\* \* \*

The argument of this paper has been that the writers of *kathā* took special notice of education in the characterization of the hero. This went beyond the essential (in most cases) formality of listing the different sciences and arts which made up the curriculum of study towards an effort to show that knowledge understood and intelligently cultivated was a dynamic and effective force in the lives of their fictions' characters. Indeed, works such as Daṇḍin's DKC exhibit on almost every page and in every section of narrative the high degree to which this is true. A depiction of the hero's formative instruction and training was thus necessary to begin and maintain this important thread throughout the creative work. Often as not, the show of the main character's erudition was as much a display of the *kavi*'s own extensive learning<sup>68</sup>. In conclusion, then, we would like to demonstrate yet another aspect of this theme — the education of the author as depicted in the novel.

In one great example of this available to us, Bāṇa's autobiography in the HC, it is the experience of the «real» world beyond the boundaries of the familiar which completes and enriches his previous formal education. In his *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* Rājaśekhara states that besides study of the Vedas and sciences travel to foreign continents and lands was a source of material for use in creative fiction<sup>69</sup>.

66. DKC, p. 66.

67. ŚMK, p. 12.

68. See for example DKC *ucchvāsa*, VI, for an amazingly detailed description of playing with a ball; and *ucchvāsa*, VIII, for its masterful discussion of *rājadharmā*.

69. *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, XIV, p. 78.

Bāṇa's mother died when he was still very young, and then his father passed away while he was yet in his early teens. Then began a time in which he led a somewhat wild and profligate life during which period his friends included a great cross-section of people, most of whom were either professional artists or members of the demi-monde. In their number were comprised poets, painters, musicians, actors, gamblers, ascetics, danseuses, and magicians among others<sup>70</sup>. In their company he wandered to different countries and away from the virtue to which he had been trained. Yet in the course of his adventurous youth he came into contact with circles of the intellectual élite which attracted his attention and re-inspired his own natural devotion to learning. This combination of extensive experience and exposure to ideas must have gone a long way towards the growth and maturation of Bāṇa's formidable skills as a writer.

In the early part of the ASK there is information given about the early life of its author, Daṇḍin. What details that can be made out from the text, fragmentary as we have it, bear resemblance to the experiences of Bāṇa as a youth. Driven abroad by the changing tides of political upheaval, Daṇḍin *deśāntarāṇyabhramat* «wandered to foreign lands» where *avasacca cīramabhīlakṣiteṣu gurukuleṣu alabhata cānavadyāṇi vidyāṃ* / «he spent a long time at distinguished centres of learning and obtained knowledge of foreign culture»<sup>71</sup>. For both Bāṇa and Daṇḍin the experiences of young manhood no doubt provided much fertile soil for the flowering of the imagination.

If we may be permitted to indulge in some speculation further to this matter, it strikes us that in Dāmodaragupta's KM we may have a disguised account of the author's own worldly «post-graduate» education. This occurs in the story of Sundarasena and Hāralatā in which Sundarasena, previous to meeting Hāralatā, leaves home with his friend Guṇapālita to travel the world<sup>72</sup>. On his journey he has much the same experience as both Bāṇa and Daṇḍin recount of their own lives as young men. There is no proof that Dāmodaragupta was here actually describing his own formative years, but one wonders how they could have been very much different; for in what other way could he have attained the knowledge to write a work so splendidly realistic and insightful?

---

70. HC, pp. 63-5. Bāṇa lists his friends singly or doubly and by name as well as profession.

71. ASK, p. 12.

72. KM, vss. 210-215 and 233-237.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Arthaśāstra, The Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra*, Part I, ed. by R.P. Kangle, Second Edition, University of Bombay, 1970.

BĀṆA, *Harṣacarita*, ed. by Sūranād Kunjan Pillai, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, 1958; translation by Cowell and Thomas reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1968 (originally published by the Royal Asiatic Society, London).

BĀṆA, *Kādambarī*, ed. and translated by M.R. Kale, Motilal Banarsidass, Fourth Revised Ed., 1968.

BHOJA, *Śṛṅgāramañjarikathā*, Singhi Jain series No. 30, ed. and translated by K.K. Munshi, Bombay, 1959.

BUDHASVĀMIN, *Bṛhatkathāślokaṣaṁgraha*, A Study by V.S. Agrawala with Sanskrit Text, ed. by P.K. Agrawala, Prithivi Prakashan, Varanasi, 1974 (reprint of Lacote's text).

DĀMODARAGUPTA, *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, ed. by Mahusudan Kaul, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1944.

DAṆḌIN, *Avantisundarikathā*, ed. by Sūranād Kunjan Pillai, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, 1954.

DAṆḌIN, *Daśakumāracarita*, ed. and translated by M.R. Kale, Motilal Banarsidass, Fourth Edition, 1966.

DHANAPĀLA (I), *Tilakamañjarī*, Kāvyaṁālā 85, ed. by Śāstrī and Parab, Second Edition, Bombay, 1938.

DHANAPĀLA (II), *Bhavisayattakahā*, Gaekwads Oriental Series No. 20, ed. by Dalal and Gune, Second Edition (Reprint), 1967.

*Kāmasūtra*, ed. by Śrī Devdatta Śāstrī, Kashi Sanskrit Series 29, Varanasi, 1964. KṢEMENDRA, *Samayamātrkā*, in « Minor Works of Kṣemendra », ed. by Raghavacharya and Padhye, The Sanskrit Academy, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 1961.

KṢEMENDRA, *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī*, ed. by Śivadatta and Parab, Kāvyaṁālā, Bombay, 2nd ed., 1931.

*Pañcatantra*, ed. by Parab and Paṇaśīkar, N.S.P., Bombay, 1912.

RAGHAVAN, *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, Madras, 1963.

RĀJAŚEKHARA, *Kāvyaṁimāṁsā*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. 1, ed. by Dalal and Shastri, Baroda, 1916.

RATNAPRABHASŪRI, *Kuvalayamālākathā*, in « *Kuvalayamālā* », Part II.

SOPPHALA, *Udayasundarikathā*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. 2, ed. by Dalal and Krishnamacharya, Baroda, 1920.

SOMADEVA, *Kathāsaritsāgara*, ed. by Jagadīśālāśāstrī, Motilal Banarsidass, 1970.

UDDYOTANASŪRI, *Kuvalayamālā*, Part I Text, Part II Introduction and Text of Ratnaprabhasūri's *Kuvalayamālākathā*, Singhi Jain Series Vols 45 and 46, ed. by Upadhye, Bombay, 1959 and 1970.